

real stakes in this year's budget debate: Is the United States, for the first time since the 1920s, going to rein in the federal government, or not? This is the heart of the matter. The rest is political fog.

Republicans are close to putting on Mr. Clinton's desk a bill that does more or less what they promised to do last November. For the first time in decades, Congress would actually cut some spending. A few parts of Leviathan would even go out of business. The tax burden would ease. Welfare policy would be opened up to 50 state experiments. And so on.

Readers of these columns know we've criticized some parts of this GOP budget. We wish it cut more spending, especially on pet Congressional fiefs, and that it cut taxes in a way that better promoted economic growth. We wish a lot of things. But if this effort fails, the alternative isn't a better budget. The alternative is a victory for the Beltway status quo. That's why this budget fight really is a seminal moment in American politics.

Precisely because Bill Clinton knows this, he wants to delay or obfuscate the real choice. They very last thing he wants is to have to decide whether to sign or veto this budget. For months, ever since Dick Morris came back as his strategist, Mr. Clinton has had it both ways. He claims to be for all of the things the public wants—tax cuts, a balanced budget, welfare reform—but he hasn't had to do anything to prove it.

Meanwhile, his left wing has come down on him with a wrath usually reserved for Republicans. Marian Wright Edelman, Hillary Clinton's mentor and mother superior of the welfare state, wrote an open letter all but accusing Mr. Clinton of child abuse for endorsing a welfare bill that got 35 Democratic votes in the Senate.

So Mr. Clinton has, for now, dropped his compromise budget zig and adopted an opposition zag. His advisers are openly bragging that this will help him on the "character" issue. If he vetoes the budget, he'll lose his reputation for flip-flopping! At least, we suppose, until the Dec. 15 filing deadline for the New Hampshire primary, after which the left won't be able to field a challenger against him.

Which brings us back to the real issue of reining in government. On this score the GOP budget is hardly radical. Over seven years, it would shrink federal spending's share of the economy only slightly—to 18.5% of GDP in fiscal 2002, from 21.7% in 1995, says the Congressional Budget Office. Total federal spending would continue to rise.

We repeat: Total spending would rise—to \$1.844 trillion in 2002 from \$1.530 trillion.

Tax revenues would climb even faster—to \$1.853 trillion from \$1.355 trillion in 1995. As a share of the economy, taxes would fall only slightly—to 18.6% of GDP in 2002 from 19.3% this year. Taxation's share of GDP has stayed remarkably near 19% for 20 years now, so this is no great change either. Congress is merely bringing its spending into line with the maximum tax burden Americans seem willing to pay.

It's hard to know what Mr. Clinton means when he says this budget is "extreme." Does he want Congress to spend \$1.9 trillion a year, or \$2 trillion, or what? How much is enough?

The president has been most shameless on Medicare and Medicaid, which are growing by 10% a year. Under current law these and other entitlements plus interest are growing so fast they will consume all federal tax revenues by 2012. Every dime. There'll be nothing left for defense or education or anything else Mr. Clinton claims to value.

The logic of Mr. Clinton's demagoguery is that taxes will have to go up, sooner or later.

Medicare is financed in part by a payroll tax that in 1937 was 2% on incomes up to \$3,000. Today it is 15.3% on \$62,600 of income. How high does Mr. Clinton want the payroll tax to go if he doesn't want to accept Republican reforms? And by the way, where are the budget scolds (Warren Rudman, Pete Peterson, David Broder) who've griped for years that politicians lack the courage to tackle middle-class entitlements? When Republicans finally do it, they temporize.

These are the real stakes in this budget debate. They have been obscured by a president who wants to change the subject. And by a media class which decries political "bickering" while ignoring the substance of the debate. The shouting is so loud inside Washington this year precisely because this is the first budget in years that is not business as usual. Mr. President, it's time to choose.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF TEMPLE ISRAEL

HON. SUE MYRICK

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 15, 1995

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I insert the following for the RECORD:

In the United States House of Representatives November 18, 1995.

Whereas Temple Israel in Charlotte, North Carolina is celebrating its 100th Anniversary; and

Whereas Temple Israel is the oldest and largest Conservative congregation in the Carolinas; existing to strengthen Judaism through worship, study, celebration and the promotion of human well-being; and

Whereas Temple Israel has been an integral part of the Jewish community in Charlotte and surrounding areas, and has given her congregants a warm environment in which to expand their minds, hearts, and souls; and

Now, Therefore I, Sue Myrick, Member of Congress for North Carolina's 9th District of Congress, do honor the congregation and of the Temple Israel as it celebrates 100 years of spiritual growth; and heartily congratulate the entire synagogue family. Best wishes for continued success, health and happiness; and

In Witness Whereof I have hereunto set my hand this Seventeenth day of November, Nineteen Hundred and Ninety-Five.

OUTRAGE OVER CONTINUING RESOLUTION

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 15, 1995

Ms. JACKSON-LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my outrage over the continuing resolution shutdown of the Federal Government and the furlough of 800,000 Federal employees nationwide. No American is being left unaffected. The House leadership is holding the American people hostage to a radical philosophy that has little credibility. Some of the services that all Americans depend upon are now unavailable. An example of these services include the following:

The Social Security Administration can no longer accept any new applications for benefits.

The Veterans' Administration is unable to issue benefit payments for December 1, 1995. Individuals cannot receive passports.

Federal Home Administration cannot make housing loans.

National parks and the Smithsonian Institution are closed.

In Houston, 2,200 Federal employees at Johnson Space Center have been furloughed.

The House considered another continuing resolution today that eliminates some of the extraneous provisions such as the increase in Medicare part B premiums that caused the President to veto the second continuing resolution. I still have some concerns about this new continuing resolution because of some of the assumptions used in drafting the bill. It remains to be seen whether President Clinton will veto this resolution.

The ironic aspect of this shutdown is that the Federal Government is not saving any money. When a budget impasse occurred in 1990 and the Government shutdown over the Columbus Day weekend, it cost \$1.6 million. According to White House Budget Director Alice Rivlin, the Government incurs expenses to secure vacant Federal buildings, pay penalties on contracts that cannot be honored and expenses to reimburse furloughed Federal employees since those employees that are usually paid for the time away from the office.

I would like to remind my colleagues that Americans are closely watching these deliberations. A USA Today/CNN? Gallup poll taken yesterday indicated that 49 percent of those individuals survey blame the Republican leadership for the shutdown.

Moreover, 61 percent of those individuals are angry about the impasse. Forty-nine percent prefer the Democratic Party's approach to reducing the Federal deficit and maintaining critical Federal programs. Finally, 48 percent of the respondents approve of the President's handling of the budget negotiations whereas only 22 percent of the respondents agree with the manner in which the Speaker of the House has handled the negotiations.

Therefore, we must end the political posturing and end the disruption of the lives of millions of Americans. Another issue is the impending default by the Federal Government on its debt obligations. A major interest payment on the Federal debt is due today. We like to boast that we are a superpower and that the world should look to us for leadership. We are a poor example for the rest of the world if we allow the Federal Government to be in default. This is unacceptable to the American people. It should be unacceptable to every Member of the House of Representatives. We must pass legislation to extend the debt ceiling without delay. And we should pass a streamlined continuing resolution to get America working again.

MONTEREY BAY AND LANGUAGE LEARNING

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 15, 1995

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, on November 1, 1995, I had the honor of introducing a resolution heralding the Monterey Language Capital of the World initiative.